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## SEMINAR NOTES.

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### THE METHODOLOGY OF THE SOCIAL PROBLEM DIVISION I. THE SOURCES AND USES OF MATERIAL.

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#### PART IV. THE LOGIC OF THE SYSTEMATIZING SOCIAL SCIENCES.

##### CHAPTER V.<sup>1</sup>

###### FURTHER FORMULATION OF ELEMENTS OF THE SOCIAL PROBLEM.

The social problem involves—

(a) *Discovery of the general laws of interrelationship between human individuals and human institutions.* The same conception may be put in alternative form thus: The social problem involves—

(b) *Generalization of the conditions of social order and social progress ;* or, once more, the social problem involves—

(c) *Formulation of the reactions of social forces in their most general forms.* In order to solve the social problem we must be able—

(d) *To describe and classify and formulate the changes wrought in persons and in societies by the different elements of human experience.* The ultimate aim of this search is knowledge about social relations which will guide effort toward the further changes which civilized men may desire to effect.<sup>2</sup> To indicate the presumptions, or rather the conclu-

<sup>1</sup> The subjects omitted for the present are : Part III, *The Logic of the Genetic Sciences of Society*: chap. 1, "Philology;" chap. 2, "History;" chap. 3, "The Relation of the Social Problem to the Philosophy of History;" chap. 4, "Anthropology;" chap. 5, "Ethnology;" chap. 6, "Folk-Psychology;" chap. 7, "Demography;" chap. 8, "Statistics;" chap. 9, "Analysis of Contemporary Institutions and Conditions." Part IV, *The Logic of the Systematizing Social Sciences*: chap. 1, "Philosophy of History;" chap. 2, "Political Economy;" chap. 3, "Political Science;" chap. 4, "Ethics;" chap. 5, above.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* VINCENT, "Province of Sociology," *AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY*, January, 1896; SPENCER, *Study of Sociology*, chap. 3; BERNÉS, *Revue internationale de sociologie*, December, 1895.

sions, from which the sociologists proceed, it is necessary to refer again, in brief, to the different lines of investigation which have for their subject-matter—

(a) The physical environment of society.

(b) The human individual.

In the first place, this organization of social research presupposes the accumulated results of the physical and biological sciences, so far as these interpret the objective world in which men have to work out their destiny.

In the second place, the sociologist presupposes the physiological, anthropological, and psychological research which analyzes human characteristics as exhibited in the individual. In addition to these, or perhaps properly as a subdivision of the psychological analysis, the sociologists must derive their immediate data with reference to the individual from psycho-ethical generalizations of motives betrayed in human actions. By this I mean that before science that is properly *social* begins, as distinct from science that is concerned solely with the individual, analysis of individual traits must have taken into account all the peculiarities of individual action which betray the individual impulses or springs of individual action, which are the units of force with which social science must deal. The most useful generalization of individual characteristics that can be cited in this connection is suggested in Small and Vincent, *Introduction to the Study of Society*, pp. 173, 177. In a word, the human individual is a center of energy to which we give the general name of *desire*. Individual desire, at a given moment, is compounded of the following elements: desire for (a) *health*, (b) *wealth*, (c) *sociability*, (d) *knowledge*, (e) *beauty*, (f) *righteousness*.

For the purposes of the sociologist, the human individual may be considered (1) as having his habitat in the environment which the physical sciences define; (2) as exerting his peculiar reaction upon the environment, physical and human, through the operation of these desires. It need only be noticed in passing that the total of these elements of energy, in individuals, may vary greatly from time to time, and that the ratios of the different forms of the energy (a)–(f) may be incalculably diverse. The direction and force of the reaction of the individual upon his surroundings depend both upon the total energy of combined desires and upon the assortment of desires comprising the total.

On the other hand, the interpretation of our general formula ((a),

p. 380) depends upon our view of "institutions." The term "institutions" covers *recognized and sanctioned forms of human conduct*. Thus institutions include —

1. *Forms of thought* (mythology, folk-lore, superstitions).
2. *Forms of expression* (gesture, language, ceremonial, art).
3. *Forms of personal action* (methods of hunting, fishing, tillage, neighborhood intercourse).
4. *Forms of coöperation* (in worship, war, industry, government).

Institutions are, therefore, as concerns the nature of their sanctions, (a) *customary*, (b) *contractual*, (c) *prescriptive*. There is no single classification of institutions which will serve as a constantly satisfactory analysis. For our present purpose we may adopt, by way of illustration, De Greef's classification of *phenomena* as a tentative classification of *institutions*.

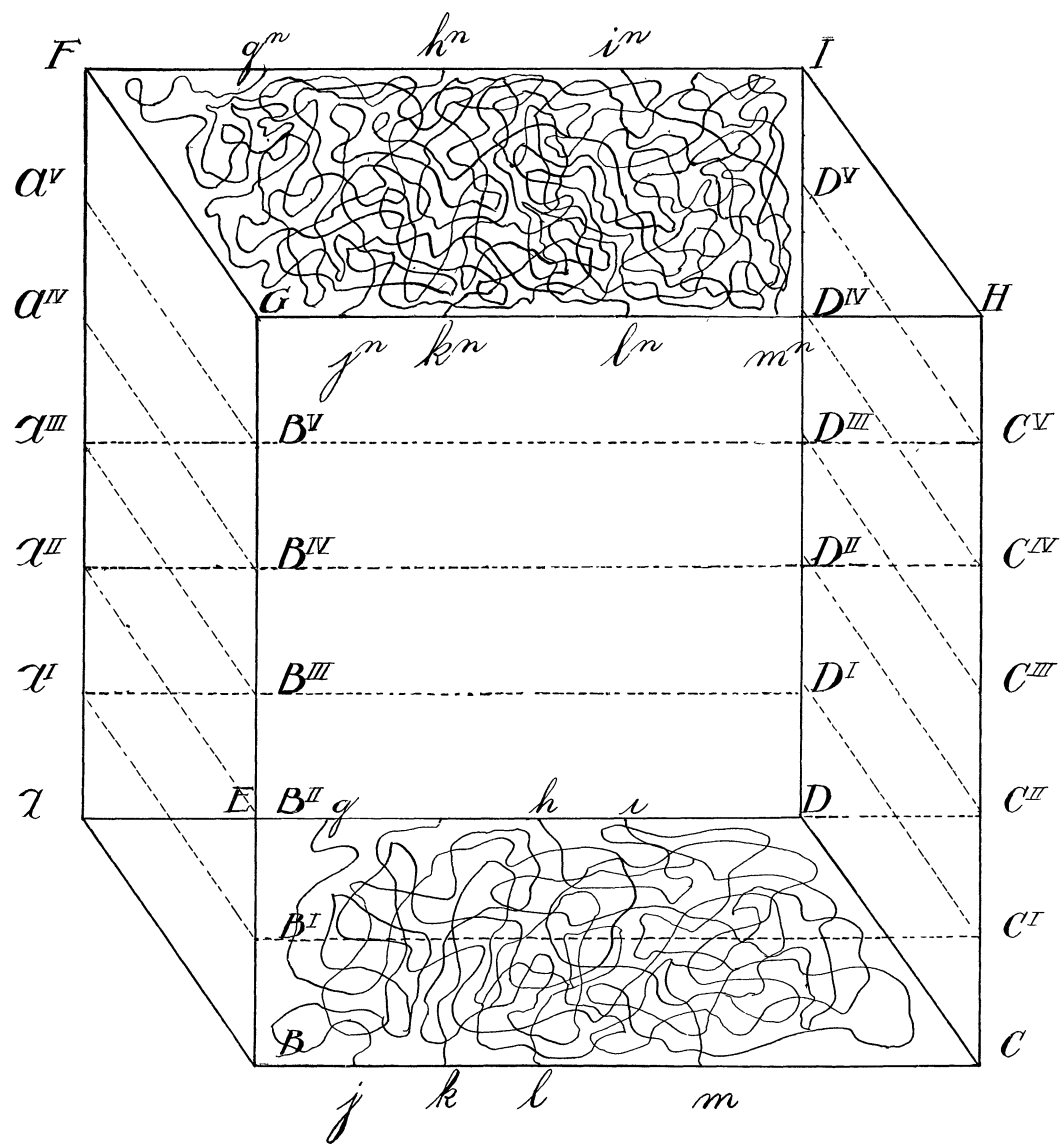
Let us represent institutions in general by the letters *g, h, i, j, k, l, m*, denoting the several columns in the De Greef chart (above, p. 139), starting on the left. Now we may repeat in more specific terms our original thesis about the implications of the social problem, viz.: The social problem involves the task:

(e) *Of discovering the general laws of interrelationship between the individual element in society, represented in terms of desire by the product  $a b c d e f$ , and the institutional element, represented collectively by the product  $g h i j k l m$ .*

This general task of sociology may be represented graphically as follows (see opposite page).

That is, we may suppose the cube whose base is *A B C D* to represent the total experience of the human race. The base represents contemporary human activities at the initial period of their existence. Each plane parallel with the base represents a "civilization," *i. e.*, the plexus of human activities filling up a period. The irregular lines traversing these planes (from each of the letters *g, h, i, j, k, l, m*) denote departments of activity. Each activity (as symbolized by the line *g*) becomes more involved in successive planes up to that which represents the latest stage of civilization (*F G H I*). The points which constitute these lines make parts of several of the lines at more than one point. These points may symbolize the individuals carrying on the activities. Having this figure in mind, we may further vary the first formula of this chapter thus:

(f) *The social problem is the problem of knowing the laws of the forces whose resultants appear both in the plexus of motions represented in the*



*lines of a given plane, and also in the variations that ensue in the passage from plane to plane.*

The social problem is, accordingly, the problem of knowledge which all the social sciences must together collect and organize. The social sciences have for their common task, then—

(g) *Discovery of the laws of reciprocal influence between individuals and institutions.* This discovery must be sought through investigations of such reactions both in selected eras—prehistoric, ancient, mediæval, modern, contemporary—and in *successive* civilizations; *i. e.*, it must be both statical and dynamical. No single section of this study can be complete in itself. In order to justify generalizations, there is need of a distinct department of social investigation whose function shall be to combine the results of all related investigations.

Throughout men's study of human association, distinguished from all the studies of individual characteristics, men have been pursuing the quest of relationships between the individual and institutions within the conditioning environment. This generalized statement of the object of search may or may not have been adopted in any particular instance. Species or specimens alone of these reactions may have absorbed attention at particular times. Comparatively restricted groups only may have been carefully investigated. All the study that men have given to phenomena of association falls partly, however, under this description. We have at length developed a distinct consciousness that this knowledge of the relations of the individual to institutions is a scientific desideratum. With this consciousness we are aware that there has been a vast amount of study of portions of the phenomena included under this general formula. We see that this study has been pursued with the use of categories differing widely in their appropriateness and precision. (*E. g.*, we use the unequally precise terms "economic," "social," "political," "ethical," "historic," phenomena.)

We are thus sharpening the scientific perception that we now need, first of all, adequate objective description and classification of reactions between individuals and institutions. Such descriptions and classifications we have, to a certain amount and extent, with partial interpretation, as, *e. g.*, in the case of large sections of industrial phenomena. Here cause and effect in the play of the wealth desire are made to do most of the interpreting. Whether the interpretations are final, remains to be seen. We are discovering further, however, that most

of the reactions between individuals and institutions have been very imperfectly observed ; that there are important phases of phenomena which have been virtually overlooked ; and, consequently, that the interpretations derived from partial observation and imperfect coördination of facts must be considered as, at best, provisional, until there has been further investigation and correlation of reciprocally modifying social reactions. In view of all this, progressive solution of the present social problem clearly requires—

1. Extension of the method of positive observation to all classes of societary phenomena which have not been adequately observed.

2. Discovery of the relations between such of these phenomena as have been abstractly interpreted, *i. e.*, in abstraction from the containing reality.

3. Extension of the method of abstract interpretation to other homogeneous groups and other series of phenomena.

4. The highest possible generalizations of societary facts, by qualitative or quantitative explanation of all reactions between individuals and groups, which can be seen to fix or to modify either individual or social types.

This study of reactions in general, between individuals and institutions, has never been distinctly proposed till the sociologists began to organize the study. Certain aspects of it have been studied ever since men began to think ; *e. g.*, the reactions between rulers and ruled. Other aspects or abstractions have been made the subject-matter of very advanced and developed sciences (*e. g.*, economics), but, as we see if we use the figure (opposite p. 382) in connection with the De Greef chart (p. 139), these are but fragments of the whole subject, and until they are thought in connection with the whole, they must necessarily be very incomplete. As a challenge for criticism I offer, therefore, this thesis :

*History, up to date, has not so much as intelligently attempted to map out the field of investigation in which we must discover the classes of knowledge that above diagram shows to be needed as a condition of understanding the experience of men in society.*

During the last century the historians have learned wonderfully *how to do it*, but they have incidentally unlearned *what to do*. They have found a *method*, but meanwhile have lost their *problem*. That is to say, if we let fall a line from the plane *F G H I* to the plane *A B C D*—say from  $M^n$  to  $M$  (political institutions)—we shall have

a relatively fair indication of the breadth of view which certain groups of historians have taken. If we draw similar lines connecting other phenomena or institutions in the different strata of human experience, as from  $G^n$  to  $G$ , etc., they will fairly indicate the breadth of view taken by other historians. There has thus far been no adequate programme for covering the ground of human experience in such a way that knowledge necessary for large generalizations is accessible.<sup>1</sup> A substantially similar claim is to be made with reference to each of the other search-sciences of society.

This claim must be tested in the case of history by critical analyses of the tasks which representative historians propose, and by classification of the results which they obtain. This test should answer the following questions:

1. Does the author make distinct provision for treating all the institutions shown by the De Greef schedule to be concerned?
2. In so far as the author contemplates treatment of all, or any, of these divisions of activity, does he apparently give them proportional attention?
3. Does the author give evidence of such exhaustive examination of these institutions separately that his conclusions are credible about the actual balance of influence that shaped events in the period treated?
4. What *explanations* apparently account for deficiencies under above heads?
5. What further discrepancies between historical programmes and the demands of sociological method does the author illustrate?

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## PART V. THE LOGIC OF SOCIOLOGY.

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE SCOPE OF SOCIOLOGY.

It is not the present purpose to make a definition of sociology that shall precisely differentiate it from the other kinds of dealing with the social problem which we have discussed. Nor are we now concerned with the chronological relations of the sociologists' invasion of the field of social inquiry, but rather with its logical significance.

<sup>1</sup> On the function of history from the psychologists' point of view, *vide* MÜNSTERBERG, in *Atlantic Monthly*, May, 1898, pp. 605 and 611.



While researches of the orders already discussed were becoming more and more scientific, men who called themselves sociologists (after the time of Comte) began to make themselves heard. To this day they have not agreed among themselves as to their mission, and, naturally enough, they have not succeeded in convincing other scholars that they have a mission. They have nevertheless persisted in declaring that the older sciences do not take up all the unknown factors of the problem of knowledge about society. Their insistence has been very much like a groping in the dark to get hold of a body whose presence is felt, which, however, can be neither described nor located. Sometimes the sociologists have declared that their subject-matter is entirely distinct from that of the other investigators of society; sometimes they have said that it is the same subject-matter viewed in other lights; sometimes they have said that their quest is for "principles" antecedent to the things observed by the traditional social sciences; sometimes they have protested that their vocation is in generalizing the conclusions of the older forms of research. Through all this vagueness and uncertainty, definiteness and precision have been emerging.

On the one hand, it is becoming evident that there are no primary facts about human beings, whether in their individuality or in association, certain aspects of which may not fall within the claim staked out by one or more of the social sciences. On the other hand, it is evident, *first*, that the social sciences, previous to the advent of the sociologists, had not given due attention to the primary facts of certain kinds, *e. g.*, those now gathered by demography, folk-psychology, and mass-psychology. It is evident, *second*, that the social sciences, before the time of the sociologists, had either generalized relationships among associated people from very insufficient evidence, as in the traditional philosophies of history; or they had narrowed their generalizations to formulas of relationships within an abstracted stratum of social activity, as in pure economics. Accordingly, it is obvious to men who have kept informed about the methodology of social inquiry that new processes must be invented to work these neglected fields. Such processes are, in fact, rapidly developing; and it is plain, too, that the knowledge already acquired about the habits of men in association is capable of generalization in more meaning terms than the special sciences of humanity have learned how to use. In other words, we have learned and are still learning, for example:

- (a) Laws of purely *personal* association.
- (b) Laws of tribal or *racial* association.

- (c) Laws of *industrial* association.
- (d) Laws of *political* association.
- (e) Laws of *confessional* association.
- (f) Laws of *fortuitous* association (crowds), etc., etc.

All these are probably parts of more inclusive laws of *association*. The sociologists are gradually tending to the perception that here is a problem near at hand, viz., *to make out the most general laws of human association*.

The discovery of this problem at once settles some of the previous controversies. It is clear to all sociologists who understand the requirements of positive science that the general must be found in the special. It is not something that exists outside of the particulars. In other words, the search-sciences about society are the immediate sources from which material for generalization of the laws of association must be drawn. If those search-sciences have not yet done their work well, they must be called upon for better work ; but their primary function is obvious, viz., discovery and preliminary arrangement of the data. The task of finding larger truths than the search-sciences have reached about the laws of association requires the construction of new categories, and such arrangement of knowledge brought in and primarily organized by the search-sciences that the categories will be properly filled out.

Instead of arguing from *a priori* principles how these categories shall be arranged, it will serve the immediate purpose better to cite tentative categories that have been proposed, and to point out that they have served to clarify sociologists' conceptions of the task to be undertaken. We may pass directly to Herbert Spencer. Without criticising the process by which Spencer reached his categories, and without attempting to decide how much of his whole system is speculative and how much genuinely inductive, we may start with the fact that, as the case lies in Mr. Spencer's own mind, he has taken into view, by title at least, all the elementary facts that occur in human life. He has a place for each of these facts, in his scheme of sociological classification, regardless of whether they are originally discovered by anthropology, or history, or philology, or economics, or whatever.

In *Principles of Sociology*, Mr. Spencer distinguishes certain great groups, in which he marshals these facts from all sources. These groups of evidence are :

- Part I. The *Data* of Sociology (which prove to be no more and no less *data* than the evidence in the following groups) :

Part III. Domestic Institutions.

Part IV. Ceremonial Institutions.

Part V. Political Institutions.

Part VI. Ecclesiastical Institutions.

Part VII. Professional Institutions.

Part VIII. Industrial Institutions.

(*Cf.* De Greef's groups in the chart, p. 139.)

In the above groups, Mr. Spencer supposes himself to have included, in form, all the essential evidence about human reactions. This is the evidence out of which sociological formulas must be constructed. Whether Spencer worked inductively is not worth inquiring at this point. At all events he concludes, whether before or after hearing the evidence we will not ask, that the same general law of evolution which he finds in the sphere of physics and biology persists in human association.

This general formula of evolution is in the now famous proposition :

*"Evolution is an integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion; during which the matter passes from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity; and during which the retained motion undergoes a parallel transformation."* (*First Principles*, § 145.)

Mr. Spencer believes that the variations in types of correlation among human beings are in accordance with this formula. The kinds of evidence classified in above groups, or completing such a schedule as that of De Greef, must test the belief. Mr. Spencer's fundamental organization of the evidence is contained in part in *The Principles of Sociology*, Vol. I, Part II, entitled, "The Inductions of Sociology." Whether we attach great value to these inductions or not, they at least serve to illustrate the perception that there are *general forms of relationship between persons* which other researches have dealt with in particular manifestations; which, however, have never been thoroughly examined, either analytically or comparatively. These inductions are scheduled under the titles :

I. What is a Society?

II. A Society is an Organism.

III. Social Growth.

IV. Social Structures.

V. Social Functions.

VI. Systems of Organs.

- VII. The Sustaining System.
- VIII. The Distributing System.
- IX. The Regulating System.
- X. Social Types and Constitutions.
- XI. Social Metamorphoses.
- XII. Qualifications and Summary.

In all this, conceptions are exploited which call for a different order of generalization from that which is peculiar to any search-science about society. The idea of social "*type*," for example, refers not merely to a *political* type, nor to an *ecclesiastical* type, but to a *correlation of persons*, for whatever chief purpose; *i. e.*, to *type generally*, not specifically. It leads to the perception that there are forms of correlations of persons, produced by large varieties of motive, yet manifesting similarities and possibly samenesses of structure and process. The biological coloring in Spencer's terms may be a mere accident of immature thought. It is not essential. It marks a stage in the endeavor to express the problems of social correlation which the sociologists are trying to define. Since Spencer wrote, the sociologists have made their expressions of their problem still more definite.

In general, we may conclude about the present outlook of the sociologists as follows:

All the kinds of knowledge which have been discussed thus far in this course may be considered as one body of facts, discovered by different processes, and analyzed and classified so as to keep its distinct phases as clear as possible. When knowledge about people is considered thus as a whole—these facts set in order by ethnology, history, philology, and the other "sciences" of human products—it constitutes a stage of knowledge which I prefer to designate collectively by the term **descriptive sociology**. Without making definitions, I offer the following outline of different stages in the process of organizing and interpreting the raw material of knowledge about society. This outline will help to distinguish subsequent stages of interpretation.

1. **Descriptive sociology**<sup>\*</sup> sets in order the *forms* in which societal contacts occur. Descriptive sociology has to recast, if necessary, and so far as necessary, the material which is collected at first hand by other stages of the scientific process (history, ethnology, etc.), so that these common forms will appear in the discrete facts. The antecedent social

<sup>\*</sup>Against the use of this term *vide* WARD, "Static and Dynamic Sociology," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. X, No. 2; and in favor of it, SMALL, same title, *AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY*, September, 1895, and May, 1898, p. 857.

sciences are thus, so to speak, partial products, or trial divisors, to be calculated into the more general formulas of descriptive sociology.

The still unfamiliar concept "*social forms*" may become clearer by reflection on an unclassified and uncriticised *list* of the most obvious of them. This list has no reference to the relative importance or generality of the forms named. Regardless of the relationships which may be made out between these forms (as of genus and species), they are named as illustrations. Most of them are suggested by Simmel (*Annals of the American Academy*, December, 1895, pp. 57, 62, etc.):

(1) Secrecy (secret societies); (2) authority; (3) subordination (personal); (4) equality; (5) control (by the group), and (6) conformity (on the part of individuals, without subordination to other persons individually); (7) competition; (8) imitation; (9) opposition; (10) division of labor; (11) hierarchies; (12) parties; (13) interaction and stratification of groups; (14) manifold reactions against external influences; (15) agency and clientage; (16) dealer and customer; (17) spokesman and constituent (not involving authority); (18) representation (with authority); (19) *primus inter pares* (perhaps resolvable into (17)); (20) *tertius gaudens* (the non-partisan, sometimes).<sup>2</sup>

The best of Herbert Spencer's work consists in making out social types, though he would not say so. One of Dr. Simmel's pupils (Thon) defines sociology thus: "Sociology is the science of (a) the *forms* and (b) the *psychical motivation* of human association."<sup>3</sup>

This necessitates study of the *psychical forces*, working through the forms. Even Dr. Simmel, who emphasizes (a) as the sole province of sociology, sees more to reward research in (b). He simply does not want the name "sociology" to cover more than (a). Without taking up the question of nomenclature, we may be certain that the social problem involves study of (b). It has been pursued under two categories, "static" and "dynamic," as follows:

2. **Statical** (sociology) **interpretation** deals with the laws of coexistence among social forces.<sup>3</sup>

3. **Dynamic** (sociology) **interpretation** deals with the laws of serial relationships among social forces.<sup>4</sup> Quite likely we shall presently

<sup>2</sup> The most elaborate treatment of a typical form is SIMMEL, "Superiority and Subordination as Subject-Matter of Sociology," *AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY*, September and November, 1896.

<sup>3</sup> *AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY*, January, 1897, p. 570.

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* WARD, *Dynamic Sociology*, first edition, I, pp. 81 and 127-8.

<sup>4</sup> *Vide* WARD and SMALL on "Static and Dynamic Sociology," *loc. cit.*

agree that the real problems in this department of knowledge concern the laws of variants only; the law of constants emerging in the previous inquiry.

The present condition of systematic thinking upon the social problem is this:

A. We have so clearly discerned the need of more detailed and more authentic knowledge that enormous demands are made upon the search-sciences for more of the sort of evidence which their processes must supply.

B. The thesis of *Simmel*, that sociology must be the science of social *forms*, has at least this effect upon the present stage of correlation, viz., it makes us conscious that we have no adequate schedule of the "forms" of social life.<sup>1</sup>

C. That being the case, we obviously cannot have adequate analyses of the *laws* of those forms.

D. The perception is spreading that the study of society up to date has accumulated merely an unclassified catalogue of social influences; that our knowledge of these influences is, at the most, only qualitative, not quantitative; that we have tentatively generalized many of these influences, both statically and dynamically; but that our formulations of them must be highly questionable until our schedules and classifications of social forms are more complete and critical.

E. There are, therefore, the following kinds of work to be done upon the fundamental social problem:

1. Further collection and primary analyses of elementary material.
2. Generalization of this material into a hierarchy of the *forms of associated life*. If *Simmel* has not been the path-breaker in this part of the work, he has surely given precision to the formulation of the task, and has offered the most exact specimens of work upon it. His sort of criticism may give value to *Spencer's* material (*vide* pp. 388-9, above), which it does not at present possess.
3. Extension and criticism of the catalogue of *qualitative* social forces, both static and dynamic. Here are to be tested all the special and general hypotheses in social psychology (*Durkheim*, *Giddings*, *Jhering*, *Ross*, *Tarde*, *Vaccaro*, *Ward*, *et al.*).
4. Teleological construction, on the basis of our inevitable valuations, and such tentative generalizations as may from time to time be adopted.

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* THON, AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY, January, 1897, pp. 568, 570.

5. Technological invention and adaptation, *i. e.*, applied sociology, or social economics in the largest sense; social control on the basis of systematized knowledge of social elements.

Before passing to more special divisions of methodology, it may be well to notice a frequent objection to this whole plan of investigation. Self-confident critics affect to dispose of the sociological programme which we have outlined (especially pp. 114, 132, 167-9) with the summary judgment that the problem is preposterous, the solution impossible, and the method useless.

In reply we modestly insist that, if the verdict holds, it necessarily condemns all study of society that tries to reach valid generalizations, and it consequently dooms us to choose between wholesale credulity and utter agnosticism about efficient social forces. We cannot argue with the man who declares that social forces are beyond human formulation. On the other hand, no man who assumes that social forces may sometime be formulated can justify a less comprehensive survey of their operation than this syllabus proposes. Anything less inclusive is an abstraction. It is not the whole, but a selected part. Formulation of the facts about the part cannot be complete and conclusive. They must be placed in their relations with the whole.

Proposal of such a general plan of social research is sometimes characterized as over-ambitious and chimerical. It should rather be said that general propositions about social laws, if not authorized by such survey as we have indicated, are merely irresponsible guesses. If we are confined to them for social guidance, our wisdom is sententious ignorance. Instead of over-ambition, insistence that there can be no credible generalizations of social laws until they are derived from comprehensive criticism of social relations is rather the humility of intelligent scholarship.

The world will be full of glib social doctrinaires so long as partialists can get credit for wisdom about society. The pedantry that prefers to be satisfied with a narrow generalization, rather than risk testing it by reference to a wider range of relations, affects lofty disapproval of the larger inquiries which genuine scientific curiosity pursues. These extensions of search forthwith discredit previous formulas. They rouse suspicion that accepted versions of special relations are provincial and premature. They impeach dogmatic authority. They concede that prevalent notions covering the questions to be investigated are unsanctioned and unreliable. They

advertise the purpose of holding all judgments about partially known relations as provisional until all the available evidence is collected and weighed, and until the relations in question can be correlated with all the coöperating factors. This admission that we are at the beginning of accurate knowledge about society rebukes the self-esteem of men who have made no close investigation of any portion of social reality, but who wish to be heard as social oracles. It tends to set a just appraisal upon men who have worked out minute fragments of knowledge and want these parts to be accepted as final for the whole. In other words, calm analysis of the processes involved in acquiring authentic and coherent knowledge of the essentials of human association exposes, on the one hand, popular ignorance jealous of implications that knowledge is lacking, and, on the other hand, pedantry and sciolism posing as scholarship. Every person with an *a priori* theory or programme about society; every person who wants to divide up the facts of human experience into convenient little blocks of toy knowledge with which he may play science; every person who wants to pretend that he understands the laws of influences in society, resents the connotations of our method. It means that we know comparatively little about society as yet, and that it will take long, hard, combined labor, by many searchers and organizers working within sight of each other, to get social facts into such shape that they will tell us much general truth.

The most energetic and contemptuous criticisms of the methodology we are developing come from men who want to preach social doctrines, and who instinctively know that doctrines of the degree of generality which they wish to promulgate have no present sanction but dogmatism. Hence they wish to be at liberty to dogmatize, and are jealous of methodology that exposes the poverty of evidence behind their dogmatizings. Every man who wants to pretend that we know more about society than we do, objects to the exhibit which our analysis makes of the considerations involved in knowledge of society.

On the other hand, the men who yield to the discipline of a genuinely scientific method frankly admit that we have as yet relatively little sociological knowledge which deserves to be dignified as "science." We have a vast range of unsolved problems, all visibly composing a comprehensive social and sociological problem. The perception that these problems exist, and that they demand solution, need not make Hamlets of the sociologists while solutions are in abeyance. On the contrary, clear perception of the intricacies and



difficulties of the social problem prompts sociologists to do the best they know in the way of immediate social action; if for no other reason, because it is the best available substitute for scientific experiment.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile it is puerile to reject a method indicated by the implications of a complex problem on the ground that it is complex. If it were less complex it would not satisfy the conditions of the problem. We cannot teach a boy in the grammar school to calculate the next eclipse with nothing but the rule of three. No more can we work out real formulas of social forces in terms less complex than the factors actually involved. Hence the alternative, either persistent parade of mock knowledge, or consent to go about the quest of real knowledge in the only way in which it can be found.

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<sup>1</sup> "The Sociologists' Point of View," *AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY*, September, 1897, pp. 153-5.